

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

A Menacing Cloud

Standard:

- I. Culture
- II. Time, Continuity, and Change
- V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Grade Level:

9-12 (*Note:* Conceptual thinking, writing, and Socratic Method)

Objectives:

The student will:

- Write a series of resolutions related to government and governmental theory
- Pick out and record the actions cited as unacceptable in the Alien and Sedition Acts
- Experience and participate in a modified *Paideia* group session
- Comparing and contrasting key documents in a chart form

Time:

2 class periods

Materials:

Documents: **1798 An Act Respecting Enemy Aliens**
1798 Sedition Acts and Kentucky Resolutions

Exercises: *The Menacing Cloud Analysis Sheet*
The Menacing Cloud Comparison Sheet
A Resolution on Current Roles of Government

Resources: *Paideia: The Cloud for National Security?*

Gray construction paper: 8 1/2" x 11" and one large poster size

Procedures:

Setting the Stage

Whereas President Adams designed the Alien & Sedition Acts to control activities of foreigners during an impending war with France: quasi-war; these acts were also designed to stop the Jeffersonian Republicans;

And Whereas these acts cast a shadow like a menacing cloud over domestic affairs and the Election of 1800 as well as the debate on the Tariff of 1828; the debates that followed had long-term effects on the theoretical foundation of the country in the future;

And Whereas the debates between John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, and even Andrew Jackson carried the issues deeper into the nation's history, it also cast the shadow presented by South Carolina in 1860 for succession;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Alien & Sedition Acts had long-term effects and on the nation to the present day. (Sample Resolve.)

Day One Procedures

1. Setting up the Classroom

- a. Put the large gray poster on the front board.
- b. Put one piece of gray construction paper on each desk along with copies of the documents and *The Menacing Cloud Analysis Sheet*.

2. Have students follow the directions on *The Menacing Cloud Analysis Sheet*, working individually, then with three (3) other students of choice, then in groups going to the gray poster in the front of the room.

3. Have students save these two sheets in their notebooks since this lesson has historical concepts that will reappear in further lessons.

4. Have students discuss as a group of the whole what they wrote on the large gray poster.

5. Take the discussion deeper by asking students to form a circle with desks or chairs, which would be ideal. Then give them the following directions:

- a. You will be forming a discussion group for use of the Socratic method, otherwise known as *Paideia*.
- b. Explain that as a group all will be looking at some quotes and adding ideas to those of others about the issue on the sheet.
- c. No idea is wrong and no idea is right. Group members can ask for clarification on any of the ideas stated. For instance: "What do you mean by _____? Students may attack an idea but **not** the person.
- d. Everyone is equal in the circle and all are expected to share ideas.

6. Hand out sheet: *Paideia: The Cloud for National Security?*

- a. Ask student to read quietly through the quotes and then make quick notes about what ideas they want to discuss.
- b. Do a round-robin with Question No. 1, asking each to give a quick answer in turn, around the circle.
- c. Next go to the deeper question. As you proceed with questions 2–5, be sure to have students ask each other what they mean by their ideas.

7. Class should end with a deep/involved discussion taking place.

Day Two Procedures

1. Hand out *A Resolution on Current Roles of Government*. Following the directions, allow students 30–40 minutes to work on their first draft. While they are finishing up, place on their desks a copy of the *Kentucky Resolution and the Virginia Resolution*.

- a. Some background classical music would be beneficial while they work independently; even better if it fits the time period of 1800's.

- 2.** Ask students to quickly scan the two documents looking at format and key terminology.
- 3.** In pairs ask them to complete the *The Menacing Cloud Comparison Sheet*, comparing and contrasting these two documents.
- 4.** Using this new comparison sheet have students return to their individual Resolutions and work on their final copy. Ask them to bring the final to class the next day printed out in 12 font /Times. (Or your choice)
- 5.** All the resolutions will be put into a booklet so that a debate on modern government can be held during another class period later in the school year when you get to the modern era.

Extension Activities:

1. For essay or discussion:
 - a.** Where else did this menacing cloud cast its shadow on rights and freedoms?
 - b.** How did the Alien & Sedition Acts affect the Election of 1800, in that it became known as the Revolution of 1800?
 - c.** Review these Supreme Court Cases in regard to the First Amendment and the Press:
 - McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
 - Texas v. White (1869)
 - NY Time Co. v. Sullivan (1964)
 - d.** How did the New England states use the nullification theory to stop an embargo on their goods in 1809?
 - e.** List other instances where a president used a law to stop the rights granted in the Bill of Rights.
 - f.** How do the events related to these documents affect America's overall diplomatic efforts? ■